

Pers. Mc Carthy, Eugene
CIA 1-02 Helms
Pers. Bruner, Wally
Pers. Gill, Bill

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SENATOR MCCARTHY INTERVIEWED

GUEST: Senator Eugene McCarthy, Democrat, Minnesota

PANEL: Wally Bruner, Bill Gill, ABC News Correspondents

BRUNER: "Senator McCarthy, there has been some speculation that the suddenly announced resignation of the Admiral as chief of CIA -- Admiral Rayborn, may have come about as a result of some of his attitudes toward your motion for a place on the CIA Watchdog Committee in the Senate. Do you have any information concerning the retirement?"

MCCARTHY: "No, I don't have any -- well, the information that he has retired is the only information I have. And no indication that his retirement had anything to do with his attitude toward the Foreign Relations Committee as a possibility that the CIA might report somewhat more fully to our committee than it now does. I've always assumed that the position he took was the position which was recommended to him by his principle in the White House, and that there'd be no reason as to why his position with reference to reporting to us would have been a factor in his resignation."

BRUNER: "Would we assume then that the appointment of Richard Helms as his successor would not herald any change in the CIA position?"

MCCARTHY: "Well, I don't know whether it would herald any change in the position of the CIA with reference to the Congress or the Foreign Relations Committee. Helms does have a reputation of being a rather sensitive person and somewhat concerned about not just the objectives of the agency, but also its relationships to Congress and its methods of operation."

"My judgment of any recent directors of the CIA among the recent directors go back as far as Allen Dulles at least. He is -- in advance of his appointment indicated a greater sensitivity on this matter than any of his immediate predecessors."

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BRUNER: "Well, was your criticism of the CIA, Senator, one of a personal nature toward Admiral Rayborn, or towards the rather clandestine activities we've been led to believe the CIA engages in?"

MCCARTHY: "Well, my concern has been with the agency itself. The early concern, mine and others, was not so much with its involvement in foreign policy as over the almost procedural question of how the Congress ought to give some direction and supervision to a secret agency. This was the concern of the Hoover Commission when it made recommendations back in 1955, and the principle point of emphasis in the resolutions which were then adopted -- the Mansfield Resolution here in the Senate and mine in the House, and other bills that were directed to this problem.

"In the course of ten years this concern, of course, has continued but there has been an added concern over the involvement of the agency in foreign policy itself. And, of course, this has been the objective of the resolution which we are reporting out of the Foreign Relations Committee to provide not just supervision over the operation of the agency as a secret agency somewhat detached from foreign policy operations, but the shift of emphasis has been on its foreign policy operations, and upon what I consider to be the claim -- not just the claim, but the responsibility of Foreign Relations as an agent of the Senate to exercise somewhat more careful supervision."

BRUNER: "Well, Senator...."

MCCARTHY: "But in the interim period, when we couldn't get action on the bill, I have raised questions about the directors who were being appointed. This is a government of men, you know, about as much as it is a government of laws, and particularly at the time of the appointment of McCone(?) I did raise two or three points of challenge."

BRUNER: "But isn't the CIA really supposed to be an arm of the President of the United States? And we've heard a lot of discussion too recently that under the Constitution, only the President is responsible for foreign affairs. Now, so, in this regard, isn't this a Presidential tool to use in whatever means he sees fit in foreign affairs and foreign policy?"

MCCARTHY: "Well, I think it really comes pretty close, that position, to being nonsense. In the first place, the President alone is not responsible for foreign policy. The rather clear language in the Constitution imposing responsibility upon the Congress to share in these decisions, and particularly in the Constitution and the traditions of the country an involvement of the Senate in the determination of foreign policy and in the direction of foreign policy.

"It used to be you could do this pretty much through.

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treaties and through the confirmation of Ambassadors and the confirmation of the Secretary of State. But in the 20th century you can't do it that way. You have to develop some new processes. The CIA is an agency of the President, but to the extent it's in foreign policy, it's also an agency of the Congress itself. And to the extent that it's in any other activity, we are concerned about its operation as an executive agency.

"It's like saying the President is the Commander in Chief of the Army and, therefore, Congress ought not to investigate the Pentagon, because this is a simple extension of the Presidential power. We're not really called upon to direct the Army, but we do have responsibility -- Congress does -- for maintaining an Army and responsibility for the policies that are carried out, successfully or otherwise by the Defense Department."

GILL: "Does the White House share your view?"

MCCARTHY: "I don't know if the White House has ever spoken very clearly on this. The indications are that they are of the opinion that the CIA is in a somewhat different category. There was some justification, I think, for that position when it was largely an intelligence agency, although even then Congress has to be concerned as to whether or not we have good intelligence agencies."

"But now that it is admittedly involved in influencing foreign policy and in executing foreign policy, I think the jurisdiction of the Congress and especially the Senate has become increasingly clear."

BRUNER: "Senator, it has appeared that you're headed for a floor fight on your attempt to get a seat on the watchdog committee. Do you foresee now any chance of avoiding that floor fight?"

MCCARTHY: "I don't know. There's been no -- as far as I know, no preliminary effort to discourage such a fight, or at least there's been no injection of the replacement of Rayborn, who really was never much of an issue in this. It was generally considered that his relation to the CIA was -- well, it was there, but that he was not a great force really in this whole great problem -- that we will, therefore, go on and have the floor fight as we have anticipated."

BRUNER: "How have you lined up support? Do you...."

MCCARTHY: "Well, we haven't done very much on it. It's the kind of issue on which, I think, most members of the Senate are quite alert. It's been around for quite a long time. And I've written a letter and there've been two or three speeches made on the floor of the Senate with reference to the CIA."

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"I expect that once the resolution is laid down, that we will then kind of intensify our efforts to inform and persuade the members of the Senate to support it."

BRUNER: "How do you project the CIA question in the coming elections? Do you think it can be or will be made an issue?"

MCCARTHY: "Well, I don't think it will be a very significant issue, although I -- from the point of view of the Administration, I think it would be helpful for them, with reference to what is called by some a credibility gap -- with reference to Vietnam, the whole rather complex and confused matter of foreign policy in the Far East -- if they were to indicate support for this resolution to involve the Congress in at least a very limited way in closer direction of the Central Intelligence Agency."

BRUNER: "Well, Senator, the President has nominated a Deputy Director of the CIA to replace Admiral Rayborn. Will this be a problem in the Senate in confirming this appointment? Is there any move to use this as a tool in order to get your seat on the watchdog committee?"

MCCARTHY: "Well, I don't think so. I don't think it would be very effective in making this effort, since the reputation of Helms is very good. There're two conditions under which it's very difficult to use an appointment as a kind of lever. One is if you appoint a man who has no reputation, and the other is if you appoint one who has a reasonably good reputation. Now, the confirmation of Admiral Rayborn was a relatively simple one, because he had no reputation with reference to intelligence at all -- no involvement really in government, except the -- well, very little excepting in the Navy, which really took him out of the area of controversy."

"In the case of Helms, you have a man whose reputation generally is quite good. And as you know, the tradition has been in the last year or two if you appoint a career man that this is a kind of non-controversial appointment usually."

GILL: "Well, Senator, I get the feeling you'd like to limit the CIA strictly to intelligence activities. Is this true?"

MCCARTHY: "Well, I don't quite say that. I think it probably has a role -- somewhere if you didn't have the CIA, you'd have to create some other operation within the State Department itself in the operations area. But when it does move into operations particularly I think it should be subject to much closer Congressional supervision than it now receives."

BRUNER: "How much information are you usually given by the Senate watchdog committee concerning the political activities of the CIA?"

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BRUNER: "To the Foreign Relations Committee at all...."

MCCARTHY: "...right here. I mean they don't report to us, no. They -- whatever information they have is pretty much their own. At least there's no formal report to us. Of course, you can always talk to a member of the committee who will tell you what he thinks he's free to tell you about it. But there's no way of indicating any relative measurement of this kind of information given to us."

BRUNER: "Senator, is there some jealousy involved here? I know I've heard many Senators say that they've been told by members of the existing committee on the CIA that those members say, 'If you knew what I knew, you wouldn't feel the way you do, but because you're not on the committee, I can't tell you.' Is there some jealousy here you think?"

MCCARTHY: "Well, I don't know if it's jealousy, Wally. I think you get involved to some extent in this in that ever present problem of the psychology of the inner ring. I think in this case the drive on the part of those of us who are outside to get in is not half as strong as the disposition of those who are on the inside to keep the rest of us out."

"As you said, 'If you knew what I knew,' is standard defense. And I proposed several years ago that any time a member said that about any committee on which he was serving, he ought to be removed from the committee at once -- that he'd developed a kind of almost psychosis that would probably serve to interfere with the proper operation of the Senate itself."

"I do think there's something of that running in the opposition, too, because they say, 'Look, we're here and we're the in group,' a little bit like the old buffalo bulls on the prairie who claimed their own range even though they couldn't eat all the grass. This is ours even though we can't quite handle it, why, you can stay out there in the desert."